

**Amendment to the Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented ~~study~~medical information merging method, comprising:

5 identifying a patient's first collection of medical information with a first collection identifier, and a logically related or similar second collection of medical information with a second collection identifier, the first collection identifier being different from the second collection identifier;

merging ~~[[a]] the patient's first medical study collection of medical information with [[a]] the logically related or similar second medical study collection of medical information, to create a composite study collection of medical information;~~  
10 ~~[[and]]~~

during the merging, reconciling ~~study~~the first and second collection identifiers of the first and second ~~medical studies~~collections of medical information;

during ~~wherein~~ said merging, ~~includes an~~automatically adding ~~[[of]]~~ medical information, according to a protocol attribute, of the first or second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information into the other ~~medical study~~of the first or second collection of medical information in the creating of said composite ~~study~~ collection of medical information; and  
15

at least one of displaying the composite collection of medical information on a display or storing the merged collection of medical information in a computer memory.  
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2. (Currently Amended) The ~~study~~medical information merging method of claim 1, wherein the medical information is at least one of medical images, patient measurements, findings, comments, waveforms, Doppler audio, and a medical study report.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~study~~medical information merging method of claim 2, further comprising computing patient measurement information of the first ~~medical study~~collection of medical information, based on the patient

measurements in the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information, upon  
5 said merging.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~study~~ medical information merging  
method of claim 1, wherein said adding comprises adding stage information of the  
second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information to the first ~~medical study~~  
collection of medical information according to a protocol attribute of the second  
5 ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~study~~ medical information merging  
method of claim 1, wherein the first and second ~~medical studies~~ collections of medical  
information include unique identifiers according to a lexicon of Digital Imaging and  
Communication in Medicine (DICOM).

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~study~~ medical information merging  
method of claim 1, wherein said adding comprises adding a series instance identifier,  
for a series of the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information, to the first  
~~medical study~~ collection of medical information without generating a new series  
5 instance identifier in the first ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information for said  
series of the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~study~~ medical information merging  
method of claim 1, wherein said adding comprises adding new medical information of  
the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information to the composite  
collection of medical information based on the new medical information including a  
5 ~~study~~ collection identifier of the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical  
information.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~study~~ medical information merging  
method of claim 1, further comprising identifying the first and second ~~medical studies~~  
collections of medical information, wherein said merging is initiated from a terminal

remote from a storage unit containing either of the first and second ~~medical studies~~  
5 collections of medical information.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented study merging method, comprising:

identifying a patient's first medical study, which first medical study  
includes a first study identifier, and a logically related or similar second medical  
5 study, which second medical study includes a second study identifier;

in response to a user request, merging [[a]] the patient's first medical  
study with a ~~be merged with logically related or similar the~~ second medical study to  
create a merged study, such that medically context-specific information stored in at  
least one of the first and second medical studies is merged based upon a protocol of at  
10 least one of the first and second studies, the protocol being indicated by an attribute of  
at least one of the first and second studies;

saving respective identifiers of the first and second studies;

deleting a distinct database identity for at least one of the first and  
second studies; [[and]]

15 assigning a unique study identifier to the merged study; and  
at least one of displaying the merged study on a terminal and storing  
the merged study in a computer storage medium.

10. (Original) The study merging method of claim 9, wherein the medically context specific information is stage information.

11. (Original) The study merging method of claim 9, wherein the medically context specific information is measurement information.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium in which is embodied a program having instructions executable by a computer to performing acts, said acts comprising:

5        identifying a patient's first collection of medical information with a first collection identifier, and a logically related or similar second collection of medical information with a second collection identifier;

             merging ~~[[a]] the patient's first medical study collection of medical information with [[a]] the logically related or similar second medical study collection of medical information,~~ to create a composite ~~study collection of medical information;~~  
10        ~~[[and]]~~

wherein said merging includes reconciling ~~study the first and second collection identifiers of the first and second medical studies collections of medical information; and~~

             wherein said merging includes ~~[[an]] automatically according to a protocol attribute,~~ adding ~~[[of]] medical information, according to a protocol attribute,~~  
15        of the first or second ~~medical study collection of medical information~~ into the other ~~medical study collection of medical information~~ in the creating of said composite ~~study collection of medical information.~~

13. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the medical information is at least one of medical images, patient measurements, findings, comments, waveforms, Doppler audio, and a medical study report.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein said automatically adding comprises computing patient measurement information of the first ~~medical study collection of medical information,~~ based on the patient measurements in the second ~~medical study collection of medical information,~~  
5        upon said merging.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein said automatically adding comprises adding stage information of the second ~~medical study collection of medical information~~ to the first ~~medical study collection of medical information~~ according to a protocol attribute of the second ~~medical study collection of medical information.~~  
5        collection of medical information.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the first and second ~~medical studies~~ collections of medical information include unique identifiers according to a lexicon of Digital Imaging and Communication in Medicine (DICOM).

17. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein said automatic adding comprises adding a series instance identifier, for a series of the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information, to the first ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information without generating a new series  
5 instance identifier in the first ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information for said series of the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein said automatic adding comprises adding new medical information of the first or second ~~medical studies~~ collections of medical information to the composite ~~study~~ collection of medical information based on the new medical information including a  
5 ~~study~~ collection of medical information identifier of either of the first or second ~~medical studies~~ collections of medical information.

19. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 18, wherein said acts further comprise controlling the computer to notify a user when said adding of the new medical information is performed.

20. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 12, further comprising controlling the computer to delete a distinct database identity of the second ~~medical study~~ collection of medical information.

21. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein said acts further comprise controlling the computer to identify the first and second ~~medical studies~~ collections of medical information, wherein said merging is

initiated from a terminal remote from a storage unit containing either of the first and  
5 ~~second medical studies~~ collections of medical information.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium in which is embodied a program having instructions executable by a computer to perform acts, said acts comprising:

merging a patient's first medical study which includes a first study  
5 identifier with a logically related or similar second medical study which includes a  
second identifier to create a merged study, such that medically context-specific information stored in at least one of the first and second medical studies is merged based upon a protocol of at least one of the first and second studies, the protocol being indicated by an attribute of at least one of the first and second studies;  
10 saving respective identifiers of the first and second studies;  
deleting ~~a distinct database identity for~~ at least one of the first and second ~~studies~~ study identifiers; and  
assigning a unique study identifier to the merged study.

23. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the medically context-specific information is stage information.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the medically context-specific information is measurement information.

25. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented medical study merging method, comprising:

identifying, in accordance with a lexicon of Digital Imaging and Communication in Medicine (DICOM), a patient's related first and second medical  
5 studies to be merged, the first medical study having a first identifier and the second  
medical study having a second identifier different from the first medical study  
identifier; [[and]]

merging the first medical study with the second medical study, according to a protocol attribute, ~~such that to~~ create a resultant composite study

- 10    [[has]] having a study identifier different from at least one of the first and second  
         identifiers of the first and second medical studies, wherein, in accordance with said  
         lexicon, the merging includes an automatic adding of a series of the second medical  
         study to the composite study, the series of the second medical study having a series  
         identifier ~~the same as~~ identical to a pre-merge corresponding series identifier, with the  
15    series of the second medical study including at least an artifact with an artifact  
         identifier ~~the same as~~ identical to a pre-merge corresponding artifact identifier, such  
         that the composite study includes series and corresponding series identifiers from both  
         the premerged first and second medical studies; and  
                         at least one of generating a human viewable display of the composite  
20    study and storing the composite study in computer storage.

26. (Previously Presented) The medical study merging method of claim 25, wherein the composite study is assigned a unique study identifier of the first medical study.

27. (Previously Presented) The study merging method of claim 1, wherein the study identifiers of the first and second medical studies are unique among studies in a database having the distinct database entity.

28. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 12, wherein the study identifiers of the first and second medical studies are unique among studies in a database having the distinct database entity.